

Emerald Ash Borer Management: Response to Staff Report

by

Westmount Hills Residents Association

to Planning and Environment Committee

May 1, 2012

Areas of agreement between WHRA and City policy

1. The *benefits* of saving trees hugely outweigh the *costs* of treating them
 - Conservatively estimated at 7x
 - Average benefit of almost \$7000 per tree
 - So every effort should be made to save trees
2. Visibly healthy large trees should be treated with pesticide to prevent EAB
 - And, costs of treating will fall in the future
3. Severely infested trees should be cut down

Areas of disagreement between WHRA and City policy

WHRA disagrees with the claim that all healthy trees have been identified for treatment – representing only 4% of street and park ash trees

- Implies that 96% of trees are severely infected or are too small
- Evidence that visibly healthy trees have been cut down
 - Independent expert advice to treat sole remaining ash on Tobin Court as it is in good condition. Former ash trees on TC were in same condition
- Evidence that visibly healthy trees are still marked to be cut down
 - E.g. Whiteacres Road and Gainsborough

Policy requests: public education

1. Mark a big red cross on each tree identified to be cut down before removal
 - Mark trees during spring/summer season; provide explanatory leaflet in resident's mailbox
 - Educates and warns local residents that a specific tree will be removed
 - Overcomes problem that most residents cannot differentiate ash from maple or locust trees

Policy requests: private treatment

2. Permit residents to have option of treating street trees with TreeAzin at their own expense
 - Avoids major negative emotional and financial implications of cutting down trees
 - Toronto and Oakville have established such permitting processes – so why can't The Forest City too?

Policy requests: assessment

3. Conduct a new assessment of ash trees to ensure *all* large visible healthy trees are identified for treatment with TreeAzin
 - Cheap and quick since ash tree locations are already in City's tree database
 - Last assessment appears to have been conducted in winter – but hard to assess scale of canopy loss. Spring/summer assessment more accurate when canopy can be observed

Policy requests: treatment threshold

4. Size threshold for treating trees with pesticide should be 20cm diameter, not 25cm
 - Oakville has 20cm criterion
 - City should aim to treat as many trees as possible given the substantial benefits
 - Cost of treating is less than cutting down/replacing
 - Consistent with 'Forest City' image

Evidence of unhealthy trees treated, healthy trees cut down

- 19 Buttermere. Major loss of canopy in 2009. But treated in 2011
- 30 Tobin Crt. Healthy canopy. Cut down in 2012



Unhealthy tree treated, healthy tree marked to be cut down

- 19 Buttermere. Treated in 2011. Still poor health in 2012



- 14 Tobin Crt: healthy but marked for cutting down

